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Love in Postscript

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Excerpt from *Love in Post Script*

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: gmitchell@sansonarchitecture.com
Subject: Lottie Update
Sent: 28 Feb 2010

Dear Connor,

I'm writing to you to give you an explanation and update on Lottie, because out of everyone you deserve it most. I apologize for being so abrupt on the mobile, but as you know, it was quite a bad time to be calling.

The doctors say that Lottie had a major heart failure brought on by her condition and stress. Looking at her scans, the doctors say that her condition had been aggravated for quite some time, and that she must have been in pain for a long while. Has she said anything to you about it? Lottie tells you everything I feel.

We are also worried about her mental state when she wakes up too. If she had been keeping her state from us, then there might be a greater lingering problem. She had been so happy to finally be well again. Please be there as you always have, for I fear she will be in desperate need for someone to speak too when she awakes. Currently she is stable, but still in the ICU. Hopefully she will be waking soon.

Thank you for being there for Lottie.

Best,

George Mitchell

To: gmitchell@sansonarchitecture.com
From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Subject: Re: Lottie Update
Sent: February 28 2010

Mr. Mitchell--

Thank you so much for telling me about Lottie. I feel terrible that I can't be there to help her out, but I'm so relieved to hear that she's ok. God, I can't even tell you how relieved I am. She had told me that her arm hurt before it happened but she didn't seem any worse than usual. I'm just as shocked as you are that it happened. She said she was also experiencing some trouble breathing. We often joke about her pain though, and she definitely didn't seem any worse than any other time. Thank God the dogs were in there.

I'm sorry for panicking on the phone. I didn't know what else to do. I feel so awful about it, but to be honest I was scared shitless. I still am.

I'm more sorry that I can't be a better friend for her right now. I wish I could be there. God, I wish it so much.

Please let me know if there's anything I can do now.

I hope she wakes up soon, too.

Tell her I'm rooting for her.

Connor

Everything hurt.

She didn't dare open her eyes in fear that it finally happened and she might actually be dead this time. Her heart finally gave up, she felt it stop when she stood to turn up the heat.

Connor.

Oh god, she had been joking with him only moments before, laughing at his worry. Then suddenly everything was wrong and the world stopped and all she could see was his worry over the screen. Then there was nothing. Nothing but the persistent pain and blackness, sometimes stained red.

She had to wake up, tell Connor she was alright, that she wasn't going to die this time. But she didn't know if she could. "You have to at least try Lots." She could hear his voice, sounding as sweet as it did on their rare phone calls. He was right she should at least try, but it was hard to keep trying everyday and act as if she wasn't as sick as she felt. She had perfected the act of being so well for so long. Everyone didn't think she was sick anymore. She was living a normal life for once.

She ruined it all in the span of one moment.

She had to fix it. Slowly she felt the touch of a hand in hers, much larger than her slim bird-boned fingers. Who? It couldn't be? Her first thought went to the impossible. *Connor.*

A flutter of movement told her that she had somehow tried to groan the name. It made her aware of the pressure in her throat and she couldn't breathe anymore and her hands tried to make their way up only to be held down as she tried to rip the tube from her throat.

"Lottie!"

Connor.

"CHARLOTTE."

Connor....she had to tell Connor everything.

"CHARLOTTE. You have to stop! It's helping you breathe." She finally recognized the voice and let her hands drop with the pain in her stomach. Connor wasn't here of course, he lived in America, where he didn't have to be by the side of a doomed girl. Her father stroked her hair when she stopped struggling and blearily opened her eyes, the tears beginning to fall. She saw

the sad look in his eyes as he nodded, leaning over her to press a kiss to her head.

“I know my dear girl, I know.” And she cried as the wrong man held her close.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
Subject: I'm so sorry
Sent: March 10 2010

Connor,

I don't even know how to begin to respond to you.

I don't even know how to feel yet now.

I just...I had so much hope you know? That I was finally going to live a normal life. And suddenly I fall and my entire world has changed again.

I should be happy with your words. But that's what they are, words. You are just words to me, no matter how much I wish you to be more. No matter how much we wish we could be at each other sides, we can't be. We aren't anything more than millions of combinations of the same twenty six letters.

I wish I could be yours, I wish I could give you my heart.

But I have no heart to give, I can't be devoted to anyone. I can't mean so much to someone when anyday I might die. I can't do that to anyone.

I can't do that to you Connor. I can't bear the thought of leaving you behind to learn how to live without me.

I woke up two days ago. I've spent two days trying to figure out how to leave you, how to stop sending these letters like I'm a small child still. I could have just never spoken to you again, but I can't end it like that. Like you mean nothing to me. Because you do. You mean more than you should, and I'm a horrid selfish girl.

I don't want to stop, I can't force myself to do what I should do. I wish I was strong enough to stop, but I'm not. I'm going to continue to cause you so much pain.

I wish I had died. Then you might have eventually gotten over it, and moved on with your life. But now I'm going to continue to worm my way into your heart because I can't stop. You are all I have Connor.

I'm so sorry for putting you through this.

-Charlotte

P.S. The doctor's say I have to stay in the hospital for the foreseeable future. I've been labeled a danger to myself. The nurses always watch me now.

P.P.S. I'm going to die here. I'm sure of it.

To: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Sent: March 10 2010
Subject: please don't be sorry!

Lottie. Thank God you're awake, thank God you're emailing me, I can't even begin to describe how happy I am to hear from *you*.

But listen. Did you know we've been talking for just about seven years now? That's a long fucking time. That's almost the majority of our short lives here. I thought you would know me better by now. You know me better than anyone else, Lottie. You should have known before you sent that email that this was the response you'd get.

We can't stop now.

Yeah, ok, all we have is a mishmash of poorly written letters and stupid IM chats and a couple of emails. Yeah, they're words and they're nothing else and there's no way we can really be together because I'm a fucking foster kid and you're in a hospital dying.

I'm more than fine with that.

I know it hurts, Lots. I know you're just as lost as I am, and I know the words are a burden because so much depends on them. I know I'm not perfect and I know that I'm nothing to base your life decisions on. But you'd have to be fuckin insane to think that I can live without you at this point. Don't give me your heart, Lottie. I know you can't. I don't want it. I want you.

You're not your heart.

If you need an extra one, though, mine is free.

--C

P.S. You're gonna pull through this.

P.P.S I would never move on, Lottie. That's not gonna happen.

P.P.P.S You're all I have, too.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
Subject: [No Subject]
Sent: March 11 2010

Connor,

I just don't know what to do anymore.

I'm going to live out my life in this hospital, tied to machines that tell me how fast I'm dying.

The person I love is on the other side of the planet.

I wish you had just said you can move on, that you would, that you could live without me. I can't handle the pressure of meaning so much to you.

Charlotte

P.S. I can't make any promises

P.P.S. I'm sorry for that too.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

From: gmitchell@sansonarchitecture.com

Subject: Another update on Lottie

Sent: 10 March 2010

Connor,

Lottie has been placed on watch. She isn't responding to anyone. If you can get anything out of her, please inform me. She just...she's given up, I've never seen her so desolate before. It's not that they think she might do anything to cause herself harm, but she no longer even wants to be better. They worry over her future. The mind is part of the healing process.

I know it isn't right to put this burden on you, but please, I know you can heal her with your words, you've done it before.

You are Lottie's hope Connor.

Best,

George Mitchell

To: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

Sent: March 11 2010

Subject: RE: [no subject]

Charlotte,

You're stronger than this pain, Lottie. I know you are. Please, don't live for me. I'm just another person on a planet full of people. You aren't just another person. You have so much to live for. You still have so much left here for you. This isn't about me, Lots. This is about you. I was being honest when I said I can't go on without you. But the reason is because I can't imagine this world without you. It's not about my pain, Lottie. It's about your salvation. Please. I'm begging you to reconsider. I'm begging you to realize that you're one of the most important people in the world.

Remember when you wanted a prince to come and rescue you and make you better? Do you remember that, Lots? I'm sure you do, seeing as you have that memory like a steel trap and all. Well, you don't need a prince. You don't really even need me. You need to come through because you want to come through.

I just need you to know that. I just need you to realize there's something utterly and incomparably beautiful about you. I know I'm all the way across an ocean, and I know I'm just words to you. But behind all the words and across all the distance is someone who infinitely admires you. Come on, Lots. Don't let it beat you. I know you're stronger than that. Hell, I know you're more stubborn than that.

Please write me back.

P.S. I don't know if it'll help, but I need to say it. I love you.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: LotsofLottie@hotmail.com
Subject: No words
Sent: 12 March 2010

Connor,

You are my prince. That much is true. I'm sorry I can't make you a superhero in my story though, I'm sure you'd prefer that.

I'm going to continue on, only to keep writing to you for now. Maybe I will find another reason eventually, but for now, you are enough for me. You are worth more than any treatment I may receive.

Someday I'll be able to cross the ocean and be with you. Until then, I fear I may struggle to keep breathing.

Charlotte

P.S. I'm sorry I can't say it back yet. Thank you for your lovely words.

P.P.S. I'll try harder to be stubborn again.

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Sent: March 12 2010
Subject: more words

I'm no prince, Lots. I'm just a guy trying to express the inexpressible.

Maybe I'll beat you to it and cross the ocean to see *you*.

I'll try to continue to be your enough. I can't make any guarantees. I make a lot of mistakes. I can guarantee, though, that I'll always be there for you. Please. Tell me all about the pain. Or don't tell me about the pain. Whatever you need to do.

The struggling sucks. But the breathing is good.

Yours,
Connor

P.S. don't worry so much about saying anything right now. just worry about you.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

From: LotsofLottie@hotmail.com

Subject: RE: More words

Sent: 12 March 2010

Connor,

Thank you for not giving up on me when I did.

Its odd to actually be dying.

Well, I've always been dying, but its different to actually be dead for once. I died for a minute there Connor.

For a minute I didn't exist.

I think that's what hit me the hardest. I almost never woke up again, never pet Elizabeth or Charles II again, never ate Marmite with Daddy again, and never wrote you another letter again.

I think not writing you a letter again would have been the worst part of being dead. I'm glad I can keep writing you Connor. I'm glad you didn't give up on me, didn't leave when I told you to.

That makes you better than a prince Connor.

As for pain, everything hurts right now. They are worried they might have to operate again. I have a lot of needles and wires and tubes and I have that stupid tube in my nose. My heart hurts and not just because of my condition.

Its harder for them to heal that kind of hurt.

Lottie.

P.S. What if I worry about you instead? I'm tired of worrying over me. Whatever happened to those chavs that were bugging you?

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

Sent: March 12 2010

Subject: RE: RE:more words

It's so hard for me to fathom. That for even one second you were just...gone. I'd rather not think about it because it takes me back to that moment. I was sitting there being an asshole one minute, and then the next, I knew something was going on and I knew it was earth-shatteringly bad. I wish it could have been me. It makes me so fucking angry, to be honest. It makes me want to sell everything I own and get over there anyway I can. I'm no doctor, but I think I could help.

You REALLY shouldn't worry about me, but if it'll take your mind off of things, I'll tell you a story about the other day. I tried to skip school the day after everything happened, but Marcia was pretty insistent that I go. I had no explanation for why I had been up all night (probably shouldn't have told you that, don't worry) so I had to go. Well, it happened to be another chem day and the bastards I was telling you about were pretty insistent that I help them out with the upcoming test. Turns out they're not gangsters, Lots. They're actually a bunch of assholes who are in an elite cult masquerading under the athletics department as a "school sport" (a.k.a. the wrestling team). The main mission of their cult is to make my life miserable. The thing is, I'm actually really terrible at chemistry. They singled me out because I'm the scrawniest guy in the room. I guess I don't look like I spend a lot of time lifting weights. (maybe I should start?) I also look like a nerd, I guess. I'm a huge target. Something's gotta change, obviously.

Anyway, the next day they came up with an elaborate plan for me to help them cheat. Basically I was supposed to write up five individual and completely original lab reports for them. *But I suck at chemistry.* I ended up writing five individual lab reports and I think I managed to fuck them all up in five unique ways.

No consequences as of yet. The papers get handed back in some time later this week, so I guess we'll have to wait until then.

Another reason to stay alive! Obviously you'll be wanting to hear the end of this epic saga.

Keep me informed.

-C

P.S. You wouldn't happen to know any chemistry, would you?

P.P.S. I feel like you would know a lot about it. You seem to know a lot about just about everything.

P.P.P.S. Stay strong.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

From: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

Subject: Chavs and Chem

Sent: 12 March 2012

Connor,

It wasn't that painful honestly. Yea it hurt, but it was more...nothing. It was empty for a moment, like falling asleep. It was still horrid and I recommend you never do it. I would be distraught if you did. And you do help, without having to abandon all your things. Do you still have

that Charles I sent you all those years ago? Charles the Second got to visit for a bit today, since we have him certified as a therapy dog. It was lovely to see him again. I'm two weeks into to my sentence and I'm already itching to leave. I have exams to study for and just...being here just reminds me of how sick I am.

I'm pondering how wise it is to mess with these boys Connor, they sound like a bunch of dull bastards, but still they have numbers on their side. Have you ever been in a five on one battle? It goes well in films, but those are just films, not real life. It's bad enough I'm in the hospital, you don't need to end up in one too. I've heard awful stories about what boys will do to other boys.

Though it is pretty fantastic that you did that. :) It sounds like something I would do for sure. Maybe you should start lifting weights though. I bet you'd end up looking pretty fit! ;) And I'll always want to hear about you.

Lottie

P.S. I know about...zero things on chemistry. We take it in Year 12 here, so next year I can compare results with you. I'm really only good at Maths, I just listen more than you.

P.P.S. I'm not lifting any weights, Connor.

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Sent: March 13 2010
Subject: 7 days until your birthday

I didn't get to mention it earlier, but there are only seven days until your birthday.

I miss chatting with you. Emails are great but I never realized how much I had come to rely on our daily conversations until we didn't have them anymore.

Listen Lottie, I don't want to worry you. And I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, so there's a chance I won't be able to pull off what I'm planning to do. But I just checked the bus schedule and there's one that leaves town several hours from now towards a nearby city where Tommy lives. He just turned 18 and he decided to get a place with a couple of friends from the foster agency. That happens sometimes.

I'm going to get on that bus, Lots. I'm leaving Marcia and Gary's. It's been really hard to make this decision, but I can't afford to go back to school tomorrow. It's a little worse than I've let on. I think the chav's are planning something really bad. So I'm just going to leave. Please don't be disappointed in me.

I can't guarantee when I'll be able to get to an internet connection again, but I'll write you. Don't worry. This'll all work out for the better. I hope.

I'll write you soon, I promise.

Love,

C

P.S. Don't let this distract you from getting better.

P.S.S. I'll talk to you ASAP.

Love In Postscript Excerpt II

Connor (actually on the road) Wilson
No longer part of any educational establishment
real life lost boy
March 14th 2010

Hi Lottie,

I'm currently on a bus. My computer doesn't stay charged long enough for me to type you a letter, but I figured it would be nice to handwrite something again. Plus, like I said, I can't guarantee any type of internet where I'm going. I apologize for any bumps in my writing--this bus is pretty shaky.

I left Gary and Marcia's today at 4:35 AM. Packing wasn't exactly hard. I don't really own a lot. I left them a note to tell them I was leaving, and I had a place to go, but that they shouldn't try to contact me because I wasn't interested in coming back. I told them it wasn't their fault and that they needn't worry about me. There was nothing they could do. I don't think they'll call the police. Foster Kids go missing a lot. The agency probably won't bother to find me.

There was no one on the bus with me when I got on, but I've switched buses twice now and encountered a few people. One of them was this old black lady. She must have been at least 85. She was with a companion, but as she talked to him, I could tell they weren't related because she kept talking to him about her husband who had passed away as if the man had never met him.

She told the coolest story, Lottie, and I instantly wanted to tell you about it as soon as the lady got off. I wish I could call you up whenever I want to. That would be so much easier. But anyway, the story goes like this: she and her husband had gotten married young, and they stayed together until his death. She said he only died two years ago. Well, she talked about how he

used to buy her things all the time and leave them around the house for her to find. Stuff like jewelry and chocolate and stuff. This happened for the whole time they were married. Then, after his death, she realized she wouldn't find anything from him anymore. Only she did. She kept finding stuff everywhere, all over the house, under the furniture and in drawers and even something hidden deep in the linen closet. She's still finding stuff, she said. Before he died, her husband must have planned it all out. Like he wanted her to find it all. She said, "it's like he wanted me to know that he was still there with me, and that he would always care about me."

It's kinda like us, Lottie. We've left a trail of things for each other that trace back to the beginning of our friendship. I brought it all with me. I want you to know that I didn't leave it behind just because I'm running away. We have so far to go, Lottie.

It really doesn't make the loneliness any easier though, does it.

Talk to you soon,
Connor

P.S. I wish you were with me on this bus right now. Or that I could be there with you in the hospital. Either would be much more preferable to this.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
Sent: March 17 2010
Subject: [No Subject]

Connor,

I've gotten your letters. I'm sorry I didn't reply right away, they had to bring me in for another surgery, more minor this time, I'm not going to bother you with the details. Just. Never have them saw open your ribcage if you can avoid it, I can barely move and it is just dreadful and breathing just sucks right now.

I hope you know what you are doing. I know those kids were awful, but were they so awful to leave Gary and Marcia? I feel even with those pricks you were safer there than the city. I'm glad you are getting off well now, but I worry about you. That woman does sound interesting though. I want to be happy like that someday. I thought...I thought me and Ru could have been like that, but I guess not.

Sorry, I know you probably don't want me to mention him, it probably opens wounds that you don't want to hear about. It's just...he made me feel better? He didn't know me when I was so sick. I felt like I could have a real normal life with him.

I guess we aren't allowed to be normal though Connor. We both just have to struggle to survive. You don't even have a home, and I have to wonder when my last heartbeat will be. It makes me wonder why we even try to keep living? I guess so we can experience life and how beautiful it is, but from I see, some of us never get that option. Do you think there is a purpose Connor?

I'm sorry for all my wondering, I'm just lonely here, Daddy has to put in extra time at work, and Miss Jenkins isn't around to come visit me like when I was young.

I wish you were here too.

-Lottie

P.S. Do you think there really is heaven? Do you think people who haven't had a chance to do anything with their lives get to go?

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

Subject: Re: [No Subject]

Sent: April 2 2010

Lots--

They sawed open your ribcage????? Are you fucking kidding me? I'm so sorry I haven't been able to send anything. I hope you're doing ok, please update me. God, I hope you don't think I've been ignoring you. Things here have been crazy, and worse, the nearest library is five miles away, and I have to walk there. I haven't had time to during the day because I managed to get two jobs, somehow. They're really small gigs but they pay, and that's all that matters right now.

I don't really know what I'm doing. It's been several weeks and I still haven't heard anything from anyone. They know Tom lives here, so I'm guessing that if they haven't contacted us by now they're just not going to. You don't have to feel bad about anything. We both know I have no real future at this point. There's no way I could ever make it to you. I can barely afford food right now. It's just...it's just not gonna happen. I...

Yeah. I just think you should do whatever you want that makes you happy because I can't be there for you. And other people can. And that's...it's a good thing. It is.

Living is just really hard right now, so I guess all I can say is that if this is it then it's all a load of shit.

I'll try to talk to you soon.

C

P.S. I don't know if there's a heaven, Lottie. I used to think there was when I was a little kid. I was absolutely positive there was one. I think if anyone deserved heaven, though, it would be you.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
From: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
Sent: April 3, 2010
Subject: You are so stupid omg I can't even deal with you

Look here you big bloody lump.

Yes I am having troubles coming to terms with fact that I am living with a borrowed stopwatch that ticks once every other tock.

Yes, you are a bloody damned stupid bastard for leaving something good, but hey, you might make something of it before you starve to death.

But you cannot after that perfect movie like confession just bloody tell me to find someone here. Look. You don't get to give up. That's my job, and I'm doing shite at it anyway because of some bloody idiot of the other side of a damned OCEAN.

Yes. I cannot respond to your feelings in kind, because I'm in an awful spot right now. But doesn't mean your words and feelings mean less to me. If anything, they are the only thing keeping me going right now. I like knowing that if you could, you would chase me across a world and back, and maybe someday I'll have the strength to chase you instead.

Right now I'm not brave enough to be greedy and say things I wish I could.

You will make it Connor, even if its just me being selfish and wanting to keep you for my own purposes.

Lots

P.S. Yes they sawed open my bloody ribcage, how the hell else would they get to my heart?

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Subject: We're both kinda pathetic
Sent: April 7 2010

Lottie--

You are such a smartass. I feel a bit as though you just verbally slapped me. No one's ever called me a big bloody lump before. That's definitely new.

But I guess sometimes it doesn't feel like I'll make it, Lottie. I guess you have to know that I'd still chase you around the world if I could. I'd still get on a plane right now and fly there if I could. But I'm a selfish bastard, more selfish than you are. I shouldn't have said what I did but I can't say I regret it. I was really scared when you had...you know. The thing. I thought you were going to die, and I kinda panicked. But just so you know, I am a fuck up, and I'll always be one, and even though I can't imagine my life without you in it, I still want you to make choices that are good for you.

You really think my confession was like something in a movie? I thought it was pretty stupid, actually. I try to forget that it happened because now that you're ok I feel kinda like an idiot, even if I'm really glad I did it. If that's what you like, though, I'm pretty much perfect for you.

Hopefully I'll talk to you soon,

--B. B. L. (Big Bloody Lump)

P.S. I know you think it was ok at Marcia and Gary's. But I can guarantee you it was not.

It took an instant for her to understand what death really meant. It took an instant to see how quick death truly was, that true oblivion lurked to be entered in a moment. She had told Connor that death had been like falling asleep, a sudden blanket of darkness over your mind as the last sparks of consciousness left you. But in one horrifying instant, in simple seconds, she realized death was much more than that.

It was different when death just catches you in the dark of your life, when you are too young to know, and Mummy just went to take care of angel babies that needed her more than you. When it happens as your beloved pet from childhood slips away as he sleeps beside you, finally freed from his aching bones and sightless days. When one day, you no longer visit the chummy little old bird down the street for tea and her ever so dry scones. It's different when you don't see death, when he doesn't grin in your face and show you just how powerless you are, how inevitable your own doom is yet again. Death was a bloody bastard, and she had never wished as badly to beat him in his smug face as she did when everything crawled into slow motion.

She was just supposed to grab some bloody eggs. The most stable thing in her life was gone for a carton of unborn chickens. It was so ludicrous she could have laughed if the horror hadn't deadened all her emotions as she lay with her cheek on the concrete. She would be told later that the fucking bastard had been to the pub early in the day, just lost his job. And killed her dog. Her only physical friend. Her protector. Elizabeth. One moment she was rolling down the sidewalk, the next thing she knew she had been on the ground, horn blaring, one chair wheel turning. Elizabeth had shoved her chair, knocking her out of the way of the swerving automobile. Elizabeth had saved her and she had to watch as Elizabeth died and she did nothing.

Lottie had thought she accepted death before, but it was something else when it happened before your eyes with your closest companion. Different when the people swarmed around you, took your mobile out of your shaking hands, stroked your hair as you stared at bloodied white fur whose life was gone in an instant. When your father runs to you as the emergency services covers you in a blanket, and begins to cry when you cannot. Even when the

police come and take your statement, and get the same sad look in their eyes that Daddy always used to have, that he has now as he holds you safe and close in his arms, just as if you are a child again, struggling to breathe. When you realize it hurts to breathe again and they examine the bruising on your side, and bring you screaming into the hospital for the thousandth time, even though you just escaped. When you have to leave your best friend behind to be buried and gone without you, because you are dying too. When the police promise they will do all they can as you are tied up in tubes and wires again, the bleeping of your life droning through your skull yet again. Death is different when you see him snatch away your way of survival like he's draining the only pond in front of a parched man in the desert. When you hope that body in the middle of the sidewalk was simply a mirage and Elizabeth isn't dead and she is going to put her wet nose in your hand and push your chair back home and pick up your pencils and push Frederick and Lana from their chairs. When you realize she's really gone and you aren't an eight year old waiting desperately for an American boy's letters.

When you have to cope in the only way you know how, picking up your mobile and writing another letter to that American boy an ocean away where he can't see your grief.

To: connorontheroad@yahoo.com

From: Lotsoflottie@hotmail.com

Subject: Eggs

Sent: 13 September 2010

C

Elizabeth's dead.

She was hit by a drunk driver and saved my stupid life in exchange for hers. I don't know what to do yet again.

Other than tell you this.

I love you. And I have to tell you finally because I finally realized I could lose you in an instant without even knowing. And if I have to live the rest of my life knowing I never told you I

would never forgive myself. Or if I died without telling you. I'd want you to know that I've loved you since we were little, when you sent me that stupid Valentine that I still have hanging on my wall. Next to your dumb dinosaur and stupid bloody sheep and all your damned trinkets. When I think of you I feel well again. But Elizabeth's dead and I all I can do is think about how much I need to tell you how much I love you and how I haven't said anything for so long because it hurts to love someone and have them die.

I'm so angry right now. At that driver, and at her for dying. Why didn't she realize I still need her? I need her stupid fucking goofy face and her stupid too big paws and her dumb fucking nose pushing me the jam jar when she knows better than to get up on the table. Just. Fuck.

I was just going to get some eggs. I was less than a block from home. I went outside and a drunken bastard has killed my dog who martyred herself to make sure a dying girl continues to live for some fucking eggs.

I'm so done with everything right now.

Just. I love you and please just never leave me. I'd never survive it.

Lottie

P.S. Maybe now I can be yours?

To: lotsoflottie@hotmail.com
From: connorontheroad@yahoo.com
Sent: September 14 2010
Subject: Elizabeth

I'm so sorry Elizabeth died. I can't believe it happened. I can't believe there are more assholes in the world like my fucking father who would be so fucking idiotic. It makes me feel out of control. It takes me back to those days of suffering. And now you have to suffer, too, because there's no curing that kind of wretchedness. Those kind of people don't learn. They can't be taught. My dad certainly couldn't be. I am so angry. It makes me crazy that it was almost you. It makes me want to do something stupid like find that guy and make him suffer as much as Elizabeth did.

It's driving me insane that I can't be there. Once again. I need you to know that I can't believe you wrote me what you did. I keep reading it over and over because I can't believe that it's for me. It's impossible for me to accept only because I don't think I deserve it and I don't think I'm your best choice. It was stupid of me to say what I said originally because it probably caused you more pain, but as much as the rational part of me thinks that I shouldn't have sent that email, every other part of me is screaming that there was no way I could have done anything else.

God, I love you so much. I know I'm probably being stupid and crazy to say it so much, but when you had your heart attack, I realized the same thing you just said in your email. It's like we're standing on a cliff, Lots, and any given moment, one of us could go plummeting over the edge. Anything could happen. I can't stand that there's nothing I can do about it and that I'm so far away.

What I can do is tell you you're the only thing that really matters to me in the world, and I'll never stop writing to you as long as I can and as long as you want me too.

I don't think I told you this, but when I was forced to move in with my grandma all those years ago, I didn't know if I would ever be able to write to you again and it scared me shitless. I didn't sleep at all when I first got to her house. She didn't know what was wrong with me and she didn't know how to fix it. I don't think she realized how important you were to me. I don't think I even realized it until that moment.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that it hurts to love someone when you're terrified of death. But I think it hurts even more to let that terror get the best of you.

Elizabeth deserved so much more than what happened to her. She was more brave than the drunken asshole driving the car that killed her.

Write me soon.

yours,
Connor

P.S. Yes. yes. yes. yes. yes. yes.